

# Family Functions' Distribution in Men and Women Concepts

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Creating a happy family with a favorable psychological climate is important both for the individual and the society as a whole. One of the factors, that influence the creation of a welfare family, is the content of the spouses' concepts of the family, its functions and their possible distribution. The main purpose of this article is to identify the specificity of concepts of distribution of family functions of men and women who are married and unmarried. To achieve this goal we used the method of psychological tests as well as questionnaires of family and parenting concepts developed by the author, aimed at identifying the specifics of family functions concepts. The empirical data were processed by using statistical methods that can detect the difference in men and women concepts of the family who are in marital relationships and those that are not. The study revealed a discrepancy of men and women concepts of distribution of family functions between the spouses. This article is practically important in enhancing tools for exploring concepts of family functions. Developed and tested procedure of the research can be used in the practice of family counseling.

**Keywords:** family, men, women, family functions, happy family, distribution in men, distribution in women

## INTRODUCTION

### Relevance of the subject

Creating a family is a necessity and an important milestone in the life of a person. The family performs important functions in the life of its members and in society. Creating a happy family with a favorable psychological climate is relevant and important for the person and for the society as a whole.

One of the factors that influence the creation of the welfare of family is the harmonization of spouses' concepts of the family, its functions and their possible distribution. The choice of a marriage partner and adaptation in marriage depends largely on the family concepts. Concepts of family functions and their importance affect the quality of education, dictate psychological health of each person in the family, as well as the family itself and determine the state of a society.

The character of concepts of the family and its functions is a powerful motivating or non-motivating factor for marriage.

The content of family concepts and the distribution of family functions is different and depends on many factors.

Thus, there is the relevance and importance of studies of the family concepts, in

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particular, their differences among the couple and people who are not married.

### **The degree of scientific problem elaboration**

Family psychology and its functions were researched by T. V. Andreeva (2004), welfare of family relationships was studied in the work of A. V. Chernikov (2001).

In family pedagogy and psychology, different aspects of family concepts were used to describe the various notions: "family identity» (Ackerman, 1982), "our image" (Chernikov, 2001), "family card" (Minuchin, 1998), "internal picture of the family" (Eidemiller, Yustitskis, 1999), "family values" (Biktagirova & Murtazina, 2015; Savci & Aysan, 2016), "family traditions" (Biktagirova, 2013), "parenthood" (Biktagirova & Valeeva, 2015; Gencoglu et al., 2016; Ilbay & Akin, 2014), "emotional and cognitive aspect of the family" (Schneider, 2000).

Tools have been developed for the study of concepts of the hierarchy of spouse and family values: technical "Role expectations and aspirations in marriage" (Volkov, 1979), to study the negative attitudes of the individual in marital relationship - the method of "negative attitudes of personality" (Akhmetzyanova & Nugmanova, 2014). In addition, researchers are actively using projective techniques ("family picture", "incomplete sentences"), which also allow us to determine the particular concepts of family and family functions.

Concepts of family and family functions and their differences, depending on a number of factors, have been given less attention in psychology. In this regard, the study of differences in family functions concepts of men and women, who are in marital relationships and not in them, seems to be quite relevant.

## **METHODS**

### **Research objective and hypothesis**

The aim of the study is to identify the specificity of concepts of distribution of family functions of men and women, who are in marital relationships and those that are not in them.

The hypothesis of the study is the assumption that concepts of distribution of family functions of men and women, who are in marital relationships and those that are not in them, are different and have their own specifics.

During the research the following tasks were suggested to have been studied:

1. Considering the essence of the family in terms of its functions.
2. Developing an inquiry form and a questionnaire to determine concepts of family functions and their distribution.
3. Carrying out an empirical study of family functions concepts and to identify differences in their distribution of men and women, who are in marital relationships and those that are not in them

### **Methods of research**

This study used the author's inquiry form and questionnaire that allow to study men and women concepts of family functions of spouses. Probationers evaluated the desirable distribution of family responsibilities concerning performance of household functions, the degree of importance of family functions. Spouses also evaluated the degree of welfare of family relations, the real distribution of family responsibilities concerning the performance of household functions, the degree of performance of family functions by spouses.

## The research theoretical base

Theoretical basis for the study comprises of the conception of family functions proposed in the work of I. V. Grebennikov (1991), as well as the concept of family functions distribution proposed by L. B. Schneider (2000).

## The research experimental base

To carry out the empirical part of the research we formed the sample of probationers, which included in total 220 people, among them there were spouses - 55 pairs, unmarried men in the amount of 55 people and unmarried women in the amount of 55 people. All samples were divided into four groups: 1) married men; 2) unmarried men; 3) married women; 4) unmarried women.

In the process of survey, the spouses answered questions at the same time independently of each other. Time for answering questions was not restricted. The analysis of respondents' answers, married and unmarried ones, was conducted in three areas: 1) analysis of the degree of welfare of family relationships; 2) analysis of desirable and real performance of the household function; 3) analysis of the degree of importance and performance of family functions.

When processing the empirical data, methods of statistical and correlation analysis with validation of results significance according to Student t-test were used (Kornienko, 2000).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As a result of the survey we have identified such characteristics of probationers as: a) education, b) age, as well as their evaluation of: c) living conditions, d) the material and financial situation and their spouse's: e) degree of welfare of family relationships, f) experience of family life. The average level of education among married men is "incomplete higher education." As for unmarried men, the average level of education is slightly lower and is rated as "secondary special". A similar distribution is observed in the education level of women, married and unmarried. The average age of married men is 39.6 years and unmarried - 26.3. As for women, married and unmarried, correspondingly is 38.1 and 32.0 years. The average period of living together for spouses is 15.5 years.

Such characteristics as "living conditions" and "the financial situation" for married and unmarried people are similar and the average result is "more good than bad." The degree of welfare of family relations is estimated by spouses (both men and women) as "good".

To determine the desirable and real distribution of household functions performance in the family, the following six point scale was used.

never      seldom      sometimes      not often      often      very often      always  
0 \_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6

## Components of the household function

The main components of the household function were identified: taking out garbage, ironing, cooking meals, washing dishes, washing clothes, cleaning the apartment, repairing of household appliances, repairing and furnishing the apartment, grocery shopping, caring for plants and pets.

Both men and women evaluated how often listed components of the household function must be performed in a family by a husband and a wife.

## Differences in men and women concepts of desirable and real distribution of the household function

Comparing data of marked groups of men and women by the method of statistical hypotheses, we have not found any significant differences in the concepts of desirable distribution of the household function of men, married and unmarried. There are no such differences among the samples of women, married and unmarried. Significant differences are observed only in concepts of men samples and women samples (Table 1, 2).

Table 1 shows that men and women concepts of what activities types must be performed by husbands differ in seven positions. Women believe that husbands should take out garbage, repair and furnish an apartment, iron, clean, wash dishes and shopping products in the store more often than wives. Men believe that wives should be engaged in cleaning an apartment, washing dishes and ironing more often than husbands (Table 2). The significance of differences in concepts of men and women about who must perform more often certain functions exceeds greatly the critical value of the Student t-test, which is at a significance level of 0.01 is 2.6. The obtained data showed that women are most demanding to their husbands in relation of the household function performance.

**Table 1.** Differences in frequency of desirable performance of the household function by a husband according to men and women concepts and degree of their significance

	Talking out the garbage	Ironing clothes	Cooking meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner)	Engaging in repair of household appliances	Repairing and furnishing the apartment	Engaging in the laundry	Cleaning the apartment	Washing the dishes	Shopping products in the store or in the market	Caring for pets or plants
Average values for the sample of women	4.6	1.9	2.6	4.7	5.0	1.3	2.4	3.0	4.1	3.1
Average values for the sample of men	3.7	1.2	2.2	3.9	4.1	1.0	1.9	2.4	3.6	2.5
The significant difference	4.2	3.8	2.2	2.9	4.0	2.1	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.5

**Table 2.** Differences in frequency of desirable performance of the household function by a wife according to men and women concepts and degree of their significance

	Talking out the garbage	Ironing clothes	Cooking meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner)	Engaging in repair of household appliances	Repairing and furnishing the apartment	Engaging in the laundry	Cleaning the apartment	Washing the dishes	Shopping products in the store or in the market	Caring for pets or plants
Average values for the sample of women	2.4	4.8	5.0	0.4	2.0	5.0	4.8	4.9	4.6	4.5
Average values for the sample of men	2.8	5.3	5.3	0.4	2.2	5.3	5.3	5.3	4.5	4.7
The significant difference	2.1	3.0	1.8	0.3	0.8	1.9	3.2	3.1	0.6	-0.6

Data on the real performance of the components of the household function by spouses are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

**Table 3.** Differences in frequency of real performance of the household function by a husband according to men and women concepts and degree of their significance

	Talking out the garbage	Ironing clothes	Cooking meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner)	Engaging in repair of household appliances	Repairing and furnishing the apartment	Engaging in the laundry	Cleaning the apartment	Washing the dishes	Shopping products in the store or in the market	Caring for pets or plants
Average values for the sample of women	3.7	1.1	2.0	4.1	4.5	1.0	2.1	2.5	3.7	2.5
Average values for the sample of men	3.8	1.0	2.0	4.5	4.7	1.0	2.1	2.7	4.1	2.7
The significant difference	0.25	0.64	0.00	0.88	0.43	0.14	0.06	0.041	1.23	0.62

**Table 4.** Differences in frequency of real performance of the household function by a wife according to men and women concepts and degree of their significance

	Talking out the garbage	Ironing clothes	Cooking meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner)	Engaging in repair of household appliances	Repairing and furnishing the apartment	Engaging in the laundry	Cleaning the apartment	Washing the dishes	Shopping products in the store or in the market	Caring for pets or plants
Average values for the sample of women	2.9	5.1	5.6	0.4	2.2	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.0	4.5
Average values for the sample of men	2.8	5.1	5.5	0.2	2.1	5.2	5.3	5.2	4.5	4.6
The significant difference	0.45	0.11	0.79	1.13	0.22	0.33	0.52	0.88	2.00	0.41

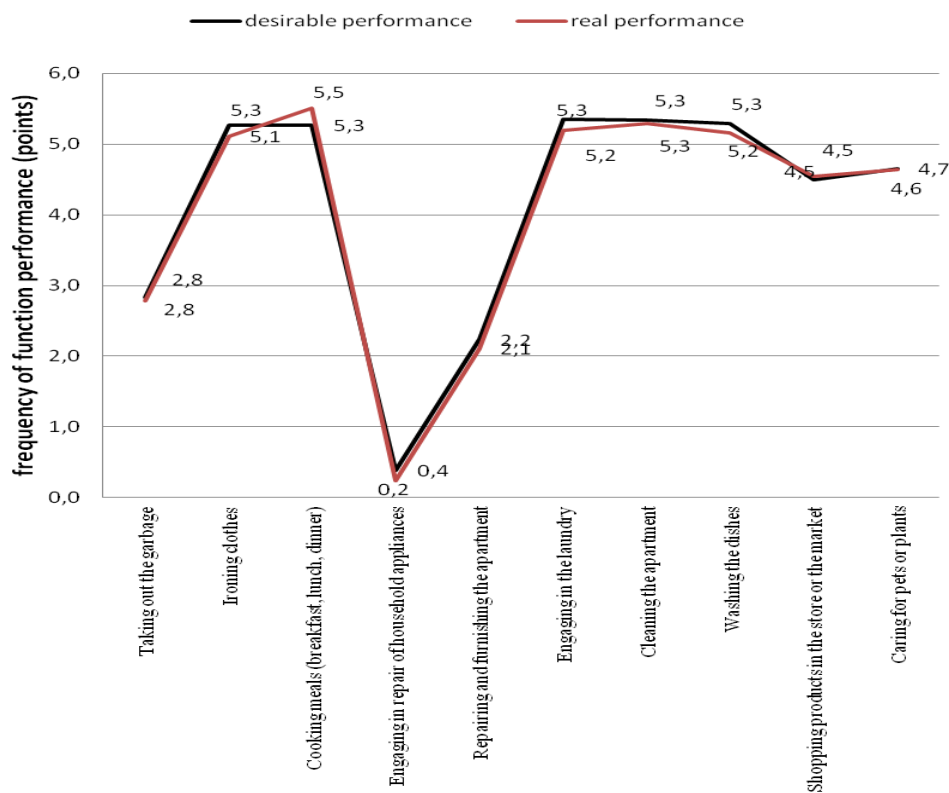
As shown on Tables 3 and 4, no significant difference is observed. Men and women equally estimate the real participation of men and women in the performance of the household function.

Comparison of women concepts of desirable and real performance of the household function by their husbands has showed (Figure 1) that the curves of the desirable and real performance of the household function are identical in form. The curve of the desirable performance in all parameters is higher than the real performance curve. This suggests that women would like to see their husbands more often engaged in performing economic functions. This especially concerns performing such functions as taking out the garbage, ironing, cooking and caring for pets.



**Figure 1.** Performance of the household function by husbands according to women's concepts

As shown in Figure 1, women believe that men should do most of the following: taking out the garbage, repairing of household appliances, repairing and furnishing an apartment, as well as shopping products in the store. The least of all men should be engaged in washing and ironing, cooking and cleaning the apartment.



**Figure 2.** Performance of the household function by wives according to men's concepts

As shown in Figure 2, the men concepts of real and desirable performance of the household function by their wives practically coincide. Men are quite happy with their wives' performance of the household function in the family.

The data received allow us to make the conclusion that the source of conflict in families is women, who are unhappy with their husbands' lack of participation in the performance of the household function.

Men believe that wives should be more engaged in washing, ironing, cooking, washing dishes, cleaning, caring for pets and plants, as well as shopping products. Thus, expectations of men and women concerning performance of their household functions are mutually complementary and not in conflict. The only component of the household function for which both men and women find the same high expectations from their spouses – is shopping products in the store or the market.

### **Differences in men and women concepts of family functions distribution**

In the next stage of the study we have examined the data obtained from the responses to the question about the desirable distribution of family functions between men and women in the family. We have distinguished ten family functions:

- upbringing, including upbringing of children and mutual upbringing of spouses;
- leisure, which means the organization of leisure activities together;
- spiritual development, which involves the spiritual enrichment of spouses;
- public, providing communication with friends and relatives;
- psychotherapy designed to provide mutual support and attention, removing the emotional tension, mutual understanding in the family;
- reproductive, which serves to meet the need in children;
- sexual, necessary to meet the sexual needs;
- socio-status, which includes care about the image of family relationships and social status;
- household, serving for the solution of economic and domestic problems;
- economic, which is important to solve the material and financial problems.

There mean values of the desirable distribution of responsibilities concerning the family functions performance separately for the sample of men and the sample of women were calculated. Then we calculated the values of Student's t-test, showing the degree of significance of the differences in the distribution of functions between a husband and a wife in the family (Table 5).

When answering the question about the desirable functions distribution, respondents were limited in sum of scores as ten points. This limitation was as a result for the need to differentiate the degree of participation of each spouse in the performance of certain family functions. That is, the sum of the desirable distribution of a function performance between a husband and a wife must be equal to 10 points.

To identify differences in concepts of men and women on the distribution of family functions, a comparative analysis of the mean values of indicators of family functions distribution in the samples of men and women was carried out.

As shown in Table 5, the family functions distribution in men and women samples basically coincide. Significant differences in the desirable distribution of functions in the family in men and women concepts can be seen only in two functions: upbringing (3.3; 2.8) and reproductive (3.7; 3.7).

Validation of the significance of differences in the distribution of functions between a husband and a wife in the men sample showed the presence of uneven distribution of all functions except leisure and socio-status. In this case, the main function of the husband is considered the economic and of the wife is reproductive and upbringing. There is a predominance of men in sexual function, household and public. Also men believe that women should be engaged in the performance of spiritual development and psychotherapy functions more than men.

**Table 5.** The significance of differences of desirable distribution of functions in the family according to men and women concepts

		Upbringing		Leisure		Spiritual		Development		Public		Psychotherapy		Sexual		Reproductive		Social-status		Household	
		Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
Men	Average	4.4	5.6	5.1	4.9	4.7	5.3	5.2	4.7	4.7	5.2	4.5	5.5	5.2	4.8	4.8	5.2	5.4	4.7	6.9	3.1
	t-criterion	7.29		2.20		4.28		-3.97				-7.30		4.11		-2.30		2.86		16.21	
Women	Average	4.8	5.2	5.1	4.9	4.9	5.1	4.9	5.0	4.9	5.1	4.9	5.1	5.1	4.9	4.8	5.2	5.3	4.7	6.8	3.2
	t-criterion	4.4		-1.1		1.6		2.8				1.2		-2.1		2.7		-3.0		-16.2	
t-criterion		3.3	2.8	0.6	0.3	2.0	1.9	2.3	2.4	1.7	0.8	3.7	3.7	1.2	1.5	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.4	0.5



In the women concepts the husband must be engaged more than women in economic and household functions, and the wife - in upbringing, psychotherapy and socio-status.

Women as well as men want to share organization of leisure activities in the family equally. In addition, women want to share equally with men the function of spiritual development, public, reproductive and sexual

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Analyzing the results, we can see that both men and women concepts of the desirable distribution of functions in the family between husbands and wives are the same. Both believe that the economic and house-hold functions in the family must be performed mainly by husbands. Psychotherapy and upbringing functions should be performed mainly by wives.

Differences in concepts of the reproductive function may serve as a conflict factor in family relationships, as men believe that this feature is predominantly female, and women feel that for the implementation of this function are equal responsibility of husbands and wives.

The results of the research contribute to a better knowledge of men and women concepts of family functions distribution. Taking into account the results of the earlier study it can be expected that the use of psycho - diagnostic procedures developed from the results of this research can help to improve the level of socio-psychological adaptation of the spouses to the differences in the concepts of family functions and their distribution.

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